SHARD

LOST GEMS OF THE SNES
A REPORT.

Thomas Vose cc-by-nc

METAL MARINES

An anime-as-hell strategy game in which you're slowly reconquering a shattered world area by area with a whole lot of missiles and "Metal Marines" - basically giant mechs - scouring enemy territory for their base while keeping yours hidden.

ILLUSION OF GAIA

There is a lonely wistfulness that permeates this game - along with its (also excellent) predecessor soulBlazer. A world-spanning story of kindness, change and sacrifice, it gets surprisingly poignant and takes some real narrative risks - particularly the "lost at sea" scene which is itself worth the playthrough.

FIRE EMBLEM

This one, frustratingly, never made it to US shores, and had it done so, it would have been remembered as a stone-cold classic. It has a remarkably grounded and well-written storyline - as a fireman on Christmas you're tasked with a major disaster - fortunately your (surprisingly effective) partner is there to back you up. All enemies are just flames, but none the less vicious.

KING ARTHUR'S WORLD

So there were a few games that used the SNES mouse besides Mario Paint - this was one. A side-on strategy game, you maneuver and position troops (and Arthur as well) to reduce fortresses with archers, engineers, knights, mages and siege engines.

Think "Lemmings" as a wargame.

SHADOWRUN

This game is just plain cool.

It pulls heavily from Neuromancer, but hey. As a Maverick Shadowrunner, you navigate the overlapping worlds of reality, magic and cyberspace to discover why you ended up in a morgue with a bomb in your head. The characters are vibrant, the combat fun but challenging - seek it out.

TOM VOSE'S WINTER EXTREME SKATEBOARDING 64

It ain't a cooking simulator - pretty much what it says on the tin - but in a pre-SSX (hell, pre-1080) world, it made for some fun, fast-paced winter sports action, with pretty backgrounds and solid controls that conveyed a great sense of zipping down a mountain.

WILD GUNS

This is a gorgeous steam-punk western arcadey shooter - you can choose between (the imaginatively-named) Clint or Annie and blast the hell out of all manner of robots, airships and space-western outlaws - plus just wrecking the interactive environments is plenty of fun on its own.